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JUN 25 2007

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for consideration of this application.

Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-6, 9-11, 25, 28-32, 34-36 and 48-49

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 9-11, 25, 28-32, 34-36 and 48-49 under 35 USC 103(a), alleging that these claims are unpatentable over Yuasa et al. (US Patent No. 6,085,238; hereinafter "Yuasa") in view of Short et al. (US Publication No. 20060239254, hereinafter "Short").

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections for the reasons set out below.

Claim 1

As recited in claim 1, the method of the present invention allows a group to be established in a visitor based network (VBN) by a non-technically trained user of the VBN, joined by other users of the VBN, and dissolved based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period.

The Examiner has alleged that that Yuasa implies a VBN because Yuasa describes a network which serves public areas in column 13, lines 17-60. However, there is no explicit or implicit mention of a network which is used by public or is a VBN in Yuasa. Yuasa mentions "network service for the resident in the information communication network environment in a building such as an office, a plant, or a hospital...". Such a building may be used by public. However, having a network in such a building does not mean the network is used by public or it is a VBN. On the contrary, Yuasa refers to the users of that network as "residents" and "local residents", which suggests that the network of Yuasa is a network of computers previously known to the network. This is a regular network, and is not a VBN. In an VBN, users of the network may randomly come and go, and may not be previously known to the network. This is an

important distinction between regular networks of Yuasa and VBN networks of the present invention, and is an important consideration in the management of user workgroups. Yuasa does not teach or suggest a VBN, and thus, does not teach or suggest user workgroups management for a VBN.

As the Examiner has pointed out, Yuasa does not teach workgroups involving user-created group identifies or dissolution of workgroups. In view of these deficiencies of Yuasa, the Examiner cites Short. However, Short does not teach or suggest establishing a group of users on a VBN based on a user request including a user identifier and dissolution of workgroups established on a VBN.

Short teaches a system for providing an authorization, authentication and accounting (AAA) of users accessing a network via a gateway device. Short teaches that a single AAA server serves several networks. This is not comparable to the dynamic group management of the present invention as recited in claim 1. There are significant differences between the two schemes.

An AAA server of Short is an authentication and authorization mechanism which receives user identification information, and returns some access permissions, including access duration, which have been previously stored in the AAA database. Short describes an AAA scheme which accepts location information, or user MAC address, or username/password, in order to obtain the associated access permissions. Short describes a central and remote AAA server which services multiple networks.

In paragraph 0042, Short describes a source profile including one or more names and other identification. To authenticate a source, the AAA server compares a user ID and password of the source against all IDs and passwords stored in the source profile database. However, Short does not teach or suggest establishing a group of users in a VBN based on a user request by configuring a network infrastructure of the VBN to support the group.

Short teaches location-based, MAC based and username-based AAA. The AAA server of Short servicing the networks must possess predefined user profiles. There is no description in Short of user-created custom groups, using dynamically user-defined group IDs and passwords.

The location-based AAA described by Short does not consider user identity, and thus allows users to be visitors who may be unknown to the AAA server. However, the location-based user profiles (e.g., access rights) must be predefined on the AAA server (paragraph 0045). These user profiles are therefore not dynamically generated, even though they may be applied to unknown users. Thus, this scheme does not allow establishing a group of users in a VBN by a request of a user of the VBN.

The MAC-based and username-based AAA described by Short considers user identity, which requires the AAA server to possess predefined MAC-based or username-based user profiles (paragraph 0042). Thus, this scheme prohibits visitors from being unknown users to the AAA server. Thus, this scheme is not applicable to a VBN.

The Examiner has also alleged, referring to paragraph 0050, that Short's workgroups dissolve and are revoked at the end of a predetermined period. However, according to Short, a login session can be terminated after a specific time has elapsed (paragraph 0050), but the relevant user profile is not removed from the AAA database when the login is automatically terminated. Thus, in Short, there is no revocation of the group identifier, and hence, no revocation of the group.

Therefore, even if one skilled in the art attempts to combine Yuasa's VLAN formed in an existing non-VBN regular network for allocating resources and Short's AAA using predefined user profiles, which Applicant contends one skilled in the art would not do, he would still fail to establish a group of users in a VBN based on a user request by configuring a network infrastructure of the VBN to support the group. He would not arrive at the present invention as recited in claim 1.

Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentable over Yuasa and Short and complies with the requirements under 35 USC 103.

Claim 25

Claim 25 also recites the features of establishing a group in a VBN by a user of the VBN and dissolution of the group established in the VBN.

Accordingly, for the same reasons set out above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 25 has been patentably distinguished over any combinations of the cited references.

Claims 2-6 and 9-11

These claims depend directly or indirectly on amended claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants trust that these claims are also patentable over the cited references.

Claim 28

Claim 28 recites a server having a registration module to receive from a user of a VBN a request to create a group of users in the VBN, and a registration driver to register the user and other users of the VBN to access the group and dissolve the group based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period.

As discussed above, neither Yuasa nor Short teaches or suggest creation of a group in a VBN based on a user request including a group identifier or dissolution of a group based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 28 has been patentably distinguished over Yuasa and Short, and is allowable under 35 USC 103.

Claims 29-32, 34-36 and 48-49

These claims depend directly or indirectly on amended claim 28, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants trust that these claims are also patentable over Yuasa and Short.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the claims currently on file have been patentably distinguished over the cited references, and are patentable under 35 USC 103.

Having dealt with all rejections and completely responded to the Office Action, Applicants respectfully submit that the currently pending claims as amended are in condition for allowance. Early favorable reconsideration of the application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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June 25, 2007

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I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

Ikuko Wada June 25, 2007
Ikuko Wada Date